

# DELAND WEEKLY NEWS.

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## Letter From

### Mayor Fletcher

HON. D. U. Fletcher, mayor of Jacksonville, and one of the trustees of the University, writes as follows to the Jacksonville Metropolis under date of April 8:

For months the public has been regaled with all kinds of attacks on the president and trustees of Stetson University, and they have been content to stand on the action of the board and let that speak for itself. The president has been assailed in the most unjust, wicked and barbarous manner in the public press and otherwise. The trustees have been held up as unworthy of confidence and wanting in sincerity and principle. Malignant and false these statements have been, but we have not troubled you for space to reply. I do not propose to enter into any discussion of the matters now. Latterly these assaults are being aimed at the University itself, and, in its defense, as one who cherishes its welfare even though that involves opposition to its absolute domination by one influence, I feel, in that behalf, called on to correct the misrepresentations embraced in the article copied by you yesterday from a DeLand paper under the flaming head lines, "Seventy-Two Left School." "The Stetson University is Now Suffering." The head line is not true. The usual number of students who go out at the close of the winter term have gone, including the Chicago students, who always leave to take up their studies in Chicago University, where they left off in Stetson.

#### THE NEW STUDENTS.

The usual number, perhaps a little more, of new students have entered for the spring term and there are in actual attendance at the University today more students than ever before in its history at the beginning of any spring term. The statement that the sentiment over the state is almost unanimous for Dr. Forbes' retirement is not true. This is equally misleading with the statement that this sentiment favors "the reinstatement of Mr. Stetson on the Board of Trustees." The author of that statement must have known that Mr. Stetson has never been removed as a trustee. He knew, as others who have given publicity to like expressions have known or could have known, that Mr. Stetson is a trustee to-day. Mr. Stetson is not president of the board. His term as president expired at the last meeting. He was not re-elected, and what self-respecting body could be expected to elect as its president any man who had denounced it as unworthy of confidence and declared he could not work with it and that he had abandoned the University and cared nothing for its future? But these scribbles and perverters of truth prefer to tell the public that Mr. Stetson was displaced as a trustee when they must know that is not true. Other statements and conclusions in the article mentioned are equally at variance with facts and untenable.

#### THE SITUATION.

So far from Dr. Forbes' connection with the University being a detriment, it is its hope and salvation. The prediction that "there will not be a corporal's guard there at the opening of another term if he remains" is on a par with similar predictions made a year ago as to the term beginning last October, and yet the records show the matriculation has been greater and the character of work accomplished by the students has been more satisfactory than at any previous term in the life of the University. There is more "poisonous atmosphere" where newspapers publishing such stuff circulate than there is in all DeLand. Kent Hall is occupied by one of the University force and the rent of a house is saved thereby. The University does not own Kent Hall, but pays rent for it to Mr. Stetson, and when the Chicago students returned, as they do every year, other students in Kent Hall were moved into their places and Kent Hall was occupied as stated and the rental of another house was saved. These are the real facts. Compare them with the scare-head article published yesterday and see what unconscionable misrepresentations are being made and how the public is being imposed upon in the effort to manufacture a public sentiment for the accomplishment of one purpose—the culmination of the most diabolical persecution of which the mind can conceive. And what does it avail? Where is the comfort or the benefit to thus attempt the destruction of a great educational institution? The institution will live just as sure as right triumphs and truth prevails.

Yours truly,  
D. U. Fletcher.

## Just a Few

### Terse Facts

IT IS impossible to reply to the many misrepresentations and falsehoods circulated through the press and otherwise, but there are some facts that cannot be ignored by unprejudiced, thinking people.

It is a fact that early in the beginning of this trouble, when there was no scandal abroad, Mr. Stetson's attorneys searched the country over hunting something that they could use to blacken the character of Dr. Forbes. They took special pains to give their so-called testimony to all who would read it, though at the subsequent investigation much of it was proven untrue and entirely overthrown by oral personal testimony. Mr. Stetson does not claim that he was hunting facts to bring before the Board of Trustees in an honest investigation, but that he was preparing for defense in case of prosecution. The question naturally arises: If Mr. Stetson had done nothing but his simple duty in this case, why did he fear prosecution?

It is an unbecoming proposition for an attorney to publish his testimony to the world before going into court.

It is a fact that Mr. Stetson demanded the resignation of Dr. Forbes and was taking steps to secure his successor before consulting with the Board of Trustees, or even with the Executive Committee, and, in fact, the matter was not brought to their attention until it was done by Dr. Forbes.

It is a fact that at the meeting called by Dr. Forbes for the 10th of September, after a most searching investigation by the entire Board, of all rumors affecting the character of Dr. Forbes, the resolutions exonerating him were announced adopted, not a sentiment being uttered or a vote cast to the contrary.

It is a fact that the University opened on the 1st of October with the largest enrollment in its history, and has maintained this large attendance throughout the year, having a total enrollment larger than any other year in its history, and a larger number actually present now than any other spring term.

It is a fact that in the month of January, while the school was thus prosperous, just before the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Stetson gave out his much-talked-of interview to the Philadelphia North American, in which he cast reflection upon Dr. Forbes and the Board of Trustees. At about the same time his attorney was put in jail in Tampa and gave out a slanderous interview to the public press. Not satisfied with this, he proceeded to publish and scatter broadcast over the land an infamous pamphlet purporting to be testimony in the case, and even went so far as to place this pamphlet in the hands of students, and by every means possible attempted to break up the school. Then Mr. Stetson and his friends came before the Board at its annual meeting in February and demanded that because of the wide circulation of this scandal Dr. Forbes should be removed as a matter of expediency, stating that the question of guilt or innocence was not involved.

It is a fact that if any other member of the Board of Trustees had pursued the course that Mr. Stetson has in this matter, he would have been promptly expelled from membership in the Board, and such action would have been applauded all over the land. The Board of Trustees, appreciating what Mr. Stetson had done for the University in the past, has not even so much as censured him, yet they are accused of treating him very unjustly.

#### IN DEFENSE OF THE TOWN.

Editor Johnston Comes Out Against Stetson's Tactics.

From the DeLand Supplement, April 8.

The Supplement has kept out of the unfortunate Stetson-Forbes fight, and it is glad of it. Simmered down to the actual thing it was a fight pure and simple between John Forbes and John Stetson. In a "scrap" between two men we had no concern—none whatever—so long as the fight did not imperil the interest of our constituents. Both were our friends. As long as both fought fair we could not interfere.

But—

When the scene of battle shifts—from the fight changes from an attack upon an individual to a wholesale effort to slaughter the prosperity and blast the future of a community—when an institution that has been the most vital factor in the making of our town and the prosperity of our people is to be wrecked as a means to an end—well, the Supplement can be counted on in the scrimmage, and it will try to be in at the death. Justification, we think, cannot be pleaded to the indictment charging an effort to kill the institution, on the ground that the would-be slayer is also the creator. The laws of our state, and we believe of no state, make infanticide justifiable. A father has no right, morally or legally, to murder his son.

The deep respect and love we have ever cherished for Mr. Stetson has caused us to deny in our hearts, if not verbally—and we have done it verbally, too—that he had left the path of virtue off in sin to stray. We could not bring ourselves to believe that the man who for three score years and more had followed the narrow path that leads to future and everlasting reward, should at the last moment, when his nearness to eternity should have given him a clearer view of the "treasures he had laid up," forget and forego his past and his future, because—what?—he was miffed at John Forbes and wanted him ousted from the control of an institution to which he had contributed so largely and so generously of his means. It didn't seem reasonable, did it, neighbor? Do you blame us for clinging as long as possible to our idol and refusing to believe that our old-time friend was the black ram he was painted?

We have endured much. We have contended from the hill-tops and high places that Stetson's motives were worthy, and as a reward we have had only the consciousness of clinging to

## Facts and Figures

### From University

IT HAVING been stated by the DeLand Record that 72 students left before last, a reporter called at the office and was given the figures from the books of the institution, which give the following facts:

Up to the present date, April 9, 448 students have registered this year, against a total of 429 at the end of the term last year.

At the end of the winter term—March 25—58 students (including the Chicago party) withdrew; the same number, 58, withdrew at the end of the winter term last year.

During the winter term this year 72 students left; during the winter term last year 70 (or less) left.

Since the beginning of the present term 27 new students have registered. These are facts. They are furnished us by those who know. These facts and figures would have been cheerfully given to the editor of the Record if he had asked for them. He has willfully and maliciously misstated facts, with the intention of injuring the school, in the interests of his masters.

The figures shown above are phenomenal—the students have been held, and new ones are coming in, the institution is prospering, notwithstanding the most diabolical efforts to ruin it. That it is prospering after Mr. Stetson has spent thousands of dollars in a vain effort to ruin it, after the ten thousand lies that have been told about faculty, trustees and pupils, is wonderful. It shows that the institution, the pupils and the faculty are in the hands of One whom perjury, dollars and vilification cannot dismay.

#### ANOTHER STETSON ORGAN.

Will Fight the Trustees Through a "Baptist" Paper.

From the Tampa Tribune, April 1.

John B. Stetson is to have a newspaper in order to combat the sentiment against him which Rev. J. C. Porter of the Baptist Witness is creating over the state against the founder of Stetson University. Some few days since the announcement was made from Gainesville to the effect that a Baptist paper was soon to be established at that place. Word now comes from that city to the effect that the paper has been contracted for and that it will be one of the best publications in the State. It is also stated that the paper is to be fed by Mr. Stetson and there are excellent reasons for believing that this is the case. As a matter of course this statement is to be denied, but the facts will appear as soon as the paper has been in circulation for any length of time.

#### Attention, Confederate Veterans.

In the years gone by you were ever ready to respond to the call "to arms." Now you are invited under different circumstances, to attend the meeting of the survivors to be held at the Court House at DeLand at 11 o'clock, a. m., on Monday, May 4th, 1903, for the purpose of organizing in such manner as may then be determined upon. Turn out, then, comrades.

JOHN A. BRADLEY,  
J. J. VINZANT,  
W. P. EDWARDS,  
U. M. BENNETT,  
T. J. SNYDER,  
D. L. WICKHAM,  
H. D. BRACEY,  
Ex-Confederates.

a man we honestly believed pure and unselfish—and the gibes and sneers of our friends who claimed (and perhaps had) a deeper and clearer insight into the muddy pool of human nature.

The shattering of an idol—the loss of a loved and cherished object—the severance of a tie that has bound us to something or someone we loved and valued, is painful to contemplate. Do you blame us for holding to hope as long as hope lived? We are still groping for severed ends of the tie that bound us to this idol of our early manhood, and we still plead in our hearts for a welding of the ends. It is with the most extreme reluctance that we would raise our hand to shatter this image that has been enthroned in our hearts these many years. We shrink from the task—we confess it—and there is no other consideration that would prompt it save a duty to the people we love, and whose prosperity and happiness is dearer to our hearts than anything else on earth—our duty to the community in which we lived before John Stetson or John Forbes ever saw DeLand—our duty to the town to whose upbuilding we have contributed in our feeble way—but when these interests are involved and the future of our community is imperiled there is a duty we cannot shirk, and it behooves us to buckle on the armor and go into the fight—and damned be he who first cries, "hold, enough!"

## Just a Few

### Random Shots

IF THIS fight should eventually turn out to be a scheme to get a couple of million dollars' cheap advertising for the hat factory, now wouldn't that jar your grandpa's preserves.

John B. should either stop furnishing "the sinews of war" for this fight on the poor Board of Trustees—or double the capacity of his ice plant.

It is rumored on the street that Christianity and Stetson now own a part interest in the Bugle. The rumor is not confirmed by the Bugle. If there is no truth in the rumor, the people will know within the present month—as Ben will flop again if left alone. He has so far flopped only once this year, and has another flop coming to him.

Wonder how long the "heated term" will continue in DeLand this year.

The Bugle stated last week that the state press had refused to print the supplement sent them by the majority trustees, showing the true inwardness of this fight against the board. This statement was about as true as most statements found in Ben Bolt's Bugle. Fourteen of the best papers in the state—many papers of three times the Bugle's circulation—have issued the supplement. I do not know whether this falsehood was given publicity by Ben through ignorance or malice. These two traits appear to be vying with each other for predominance at the Bugle office. Will the Bugle kindly inform an anxious public as to the number of papers in the state that have printed the Stetson side—the "Blue Book".

I do not know that it is necessary to deny anything stated in A. C. Haynes' long-winded article, as everyone knows that what Zan doesn't know about their trustees' meeting would fill seven or eight copies of the Congressional Record. The following is the true version of one mis-stated reference:

In the board meeting last September, Dr. Forbes sat quiet until the statement was made that he had said that "he intended to live or die by her". He rose to his feet and with all the power at his command denounced the statement as absolutely false. He asked to reinstate Mrs. Mathes as an act of simple justice—and Mr. Stetson and Dr. Foster said, "That is right". Dr. Foster has denied over his own signature that he ever said that "Dr. Forbes did not want an investigation." This brands as false the statement that Dr. Foster said that Dr. Forbes exclaimed: "My God, I want no examination."

Dr. Forbes' letter saying "he hoped Mr. Stetson would do right, that is do nothing," was written just after the Ashbourne agreement to settle and drop everything and after two investigations had been held. This was in answer to a letter telling him that Mr. Stetson was not keeping the Ashbourne agreement.

If Mrs. Forbes was made ill by the scandal, why wasn't it when she first heard it? She expressed the utmost contempt for it and was only made ill when she came to realize that Mr. and Mrs. Stetson listened to it and were using it against Dr. Forbes with all their power. Dr. Forbes could not then believe that Mr. Stetson had turned against him, and attributed Mrs. Forbes' belief to her illness. He would not fully believe it until receiving the letter telling him to "remove his effects from the house"; then he knew it meant, not "a leave of absence," but going for good, in the face of the scandal; it meant dishonor and ruin. He determined to fight for his honor, and that is all he is doing or has done.

CHRIS. O. CODRINGTON.

#### FROM TALLAHASSEE.

Legislature Organizes—The Governor's Fine Message.

Tallahassee, April 8.—The Legislature met in bi-annual session on Tuesday. Hon. Cromwell Gibbons of Jacksonville was elected Speaker of the House and Hon. Frank Adams of Jasper President of the Senate. O. R. Kirchoff of DeLeon Springs was elected as janitor of the senate—a good, fat job paying \$6 per day.

Governor Jennings' message was sent to both houses yesterday. It is a splendid state document, the most able and thorough ever written by a Florida governor.

Bills have already begun to pour into the two houses.

Prospects are good for the most productive session of the Legislature ever held.

There is over a million dollars of cash in the hands of the state treasurer, and the expenditure of this money in a wise, conscientious manner will be the most important duty to come before the Legislature.

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J. R. Wetherell

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SILAS B. WRIGHT, DeLand, Fla.



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Courses leading to the three degrees—A.B., Ph.D., and S.B.—are designed to lay broad foundations for any walk in life. After the Sophomore year, opportunity is given for election of studies in the direction of the student's special aptitudes.

The Central Dining Hall will offer good food at actual cost, not to exceed eight dollars per month. Furnished rooms are let at one dollar per month for each lodger. This system is under the immediate supervision of a member of the Faculty, who is assisted by a competent and experienced matron.

All necessary expenses for the college year may be brought within \$175.00.

FALL TERM OPENS SEPTEMBER 17, 1902

For catalogue and other information, address

James E. Dickey, President,

OXFORD, GEORGIA.